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TAGS: PREL PGOV IR XF EUN GM

SUBJECT: IRAN DEMARCHE: GERMAN RESPONSE

REF: STATE 141316

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires John M. Koenig for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Charge delivered reftel points to Foreign Office State Secretary Reinhard Silberberg October 12. (Charge also discussed Iran with Political Director Volker Stanzel October 10, raising points similar to those in reftel.) Silberberg said the text of the EU Council conclusions had been agreed October 11 in Brussels -- the Germans expected these conclusions as currently drafted to be approved by ministers at the GAERC. (Silberberg subsequently provided the entire text to post, which we will transmit to P staff, NEA, and EUR by email.)

State Secretary Outlines German Support for "Additional Measures"

¶2. (C) Silberberg read out what he called the key passage of the agreed text (which differs slightly from the text in Paragraph 6 of reftel): "The Council agreed that the EU will consider what additional measures it might take in order to support the UN process and the shared objectives of the international community, and invited the relevant Council bodies to provide timely advice." Silberberg said this would start review by working groups "with a view to next steps in the UNSC." The EU objective would be steps that went beyond UNSC action, but Silberberg said Germany believed agreement on, and implementation of, more forward-leaning steps at this time could undermine UNSC efforts. He said that the French position was now in line with Germany's, following on President Sarkozy's visit to Moscow -- the French reportedly had backed away from their proposal for "autonomous" sanctions in advance of a UNSC decision.

¶3. (C) The Charge pressed on the German position with respect to autonomous sanctions. If quick agreement were impossible in the UNSC, would Germany be prepared to proceed with autonomous sanctions? Silberberg said this would be the case.

Political Director's Views on Chinese Decision-Making

¶4. (C) In their October 10 conversation, Charge asked PolDir Stanzel (who was German Ambassador in Beijing until summer 2008) for his views on the dynamics within China on Iran. Stanzel said he thought China would eventually join the EU3 1 approach, and remarked that Russia would be tougher, in his opinion. China had a slower decision-making process, one that was subject to different "influence patterns" than in western democracies, and this would continue to be

frustrating. He outlined three competing visions in the Chinese foreign policy community on China's role in the world:

-- the first was the traditional foreign policy elite, which instinctively looked at situations as win-lose and sought positions that allowed China to profit from disagreements among others (e.g., between U.S. and Iran).

-- the second was the "modern" elite, the people who, as Stanzel put it, "got China into the WTO." These saw China as interdependent with the world. They would tend to try to find ways to accommodate the position of the superpower, regardless of the substance. "If it's important to the U.S., why not go along?"

-- the third was a younger group, which had lived/studied abroad, and understood the substance of complicated international issues. These were still very few.

The Chinese decision-making process was layered, and didn't end with a Minister's decision. From there it went to the committees of the Communist Party, all of which took time and was cumbersome and opaque. But, once a political decision was taken, he felt that Chinese economic interests would unquestioningly yield.

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